

ADDRESS OF PROFESSOR ANATOL JAMES SHNEIDEROV,
PRESIDENT OF THE POLYCULTURAL INSTITUTION OF AMERICA,
AT THE INFORMATIONAL DINNER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS
AND TO MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
AT THE SHOREHAM HOTEL, WASHINGTON, D.C., MARCH 20, 1952

"LET US BE POLYCULTURAL" - A Historical Summary

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my pleasure and honor to greet you at the first international meeting of a Polycultural Institution. To me, at least, the word "Polycultural" is significant of a modest present and a very important future vision for the polycultural idea of learning.

The purpose of this meeting is to relate to you a story of the Polycultural Institution of America: Its immediate objectives, the final goal, and the aspirations which lead this young institution of higher learning toward the goal, and move it forward from its one-room birth-place in 1945, and through the persistent struggle for existence through the following years of the Institution's childhood.

The concept for a Polycultural Institution happened to come to me. The idea gradually took form as follows.

In the year of 1944 I was teaching Slavic philology and the Russian language to a class of professors at Johns Hopkins University. Among those professors were three noted language scholars - Professor Leo Spitzer, Professor Henry Carrington Lancaster, and Professor Kamp Malone - who made the suggestion that there was a place for a school of Slavic languages in Washington as the hub city of so many international activities.

This suggestion did not lie dormant. The next year - 1945 - I opened a private school of Slavic languages.

My capital was \$70 - only \$70! It was not 70 thousand dollars, nor even 7 thousand dollars, but just the seven times 10 dollars which I was able to scrape together as working capital to open the school and to operate it for the first two months of its life. Now, I ask you Ladies and Gentlemen, kindly to bear this figure in your minds since I will refer to it later in my remarks.

Russian Language was first offering.

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

The Russian language was the sole offering during the summer session of 1945. There was a staff of one - myself. I taught Russian phonetics and morphology to 6 students. The fall offerings of 1945 were

Russian, Polish and Czech, with 11, 3, and 2 students in each class respectively. Our faculty were 4 - and we began to feel crowded in our one-room school. This space handicap persisted through 1946. Our faculty grew to seven instructors teaching, Russian, Polish, Serbian, Czech and Bulgarian.

Then, 1946 like 1944 was a year of decision. For, in 1946 the concept of the school changed so as to include not only languages but also the cultural bases of those languages - the civilizations of the peoples concerned. Our research for this expansion led us to examine the established curricula of a large number of universities throughout the world - American, Australian, and the older institutions of Europe and the British Isles. Among those from whom we received greatest inspiration were the University of Melbourne in Australia; Leopold-Franzens Universität, Innsbruck and the Universität Wien in Austria; Karl University in Prague, Czechoslovakia; the School of Slavonic and East-European Studies of the University of London; L'Université de Neuchâtel, in Switzerland.

The programs of Harvard, Stanford, and Columbia Universities contributed to our thinking.

By way of personal note, I take the liberty of telling you that in 1946 and 1947 I had to be two people: The student and the teacher. I decided that my three degrees in engineering and my language and scientific training would be helped by a degree dedicated to the art of teaching. So, Thursdays through Saturdays of 1946 and '47 were spent in studies at Columbia University in New York and Mondays through Wednesdays were the days of my teaching here in Washington. This resulted in my attaining my Master's Degree in Education at Teachers College, Columbia University in 1948. And, as you know, this job of learning is never really complete, so I have one more semester of residence work to do at the University to qualify me to enter myself as a candidate for the doctorate in anthropology and linguistics.

The School Expands.

While I was "expanding" personally, during this period, so was the school. The expansion was not my idea alone, but rather grew out of the expressions of interest and belief of many of our students, including a Senator of the United States. This resulted in the addition of non-Slavic languages and cultures, such as Finnish, Latvian, Magyar, and Turkish, which also resulted in a change in the name of the School to "The Institute of Slavic and East-European Studies". 1947 was also a milestone in that the School was approved by the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, under Public Law 346. During all of this time we were bursting at the seams for space and the landlord finally cooperated in reverse - or otherwise, as you choose to interpret it - by selling the house we were partially occupying - and we had to move.

A building of nine rooms - modest but well located - two blocks away was rented, at 1329 18th Street, N.W. and the new year of 1948 was celebrated by the faculty of the Institute of Slavic and East-European Studies in its new premises where we have been located since. Our Faculty grew to 34 instructors - five of whom were from the staffs of the Embassies here in our national capital. Twenty-four languages and cultures were included in the offerings of the School in 1948.

In 1949 the number of offerings grew to 48 with 66 members on the faculty - 15 of whom were from staffs of embassies and legations here. As in most schools here in Washington, the enrollment became largely late afternoon and evening students which necessitated severe limitations in the number we were able to accept because of the ever-limiting space factor. Our day work could have been expanded except for the Washington habit of attending school at night. Consequently, our current problem cannot be improved until we have the opportunity of going into a bigger plant which I hope is a very immediate possibility.

In 1949 our visitors came more and more to include professors from other American colleges and universities who came to see and talk with us about our method of teaching languages and cultures which had spread its gospel as good methods always do. A few of these scholars stayed with the school as participants for a period of several months. All of this has resulted in having our credits accepted by other institutions on a parity basis for their own degrees.

Adult Education added to Program.

In 1949 requests for languages and cultures reached beyond the geographical boundaries of Eastern Europe. In addition, the Institute of Adult Studies was organized and incorporated in the general offerings, based upon the adult education development in the United States that "everything learnable and teachable within the facilities of the Institution and within the desire for learning is desirable".

The Word "Polycultural" Created.

Out of all this past was conceived the idea which we now designate by the word "Polycultural". Like all good ideas, this one germinated slowly but naturally. The pressing need to find a proper name for the Institution was rooted in the fact that the School now taught many cultures, languages and many other subjects which were not East-European. We hunted for a word. None commonly used seemed quite right. We finally created the word. It was "Polycultural". This new word fitted because it embodied within it the concepts and the meanings which are part and parcel of teaching peoples to know and understand one another better.

So, today our name is "The Polycultural Institution of America" which we affectionately abbreviate as PIA.

Institution Incorporated.

On the fourth day of August of 1950 the Polycultural Institution of America became a corporate entity. It was on that date that the Institution was incorporated under that name as a non-profit institution of higher learning, having "the rank and standing of a university", conferring professional certificates, diplomas, and degrees, subject to the enactment by the Congress of the United States of America or to the license of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia.

The ~~char~~ter of incorporation was signed by:

Honorable Watkins M. Abbitt
Honorable Usher L. Burdick
Honorable H. R. Gross
Honorable Harold C. Hagen
Honorable Charles R. Howell

These Congressmen, with Mr. William O. Skeels, formerly with late Congressman Lempke who vigorously supported the enterprise in its intercultural and international aspects, together with myself, became and are the Executive Board of Regents - the governing body of the Polycultural Institution of America.

Since that time, Congressmen Victor L. Anfuso, Wayne N. Aspinall, Cleveland M. Bailey, Ernest Greenwood, William Jennings Bryan Dorn, Carl Elliot, Daniel J. Flood, Abraham J. Multer, Melvin P. Price, and Peter W. Rodino became members of the Board of Regents, lending their names and support to the development of the Institution. Others - a few of whom are here this evening - have been extended an invitation to join hands with those on the Board. The objective of such of those as do join will of course be the same as the objective of those who are now members of the Board - namely, and I quote from the Charter, "to render a national service by educating a limited number of Americans in the civilizations and languages of the world; and for the purpose of maintaining, encouraging and promoting intercultural and international understanding, justice, decency, friendship, and lasting peace by education foreign students, scholars, and investigators in the civilization and the language of these United States of America and in the civilizations and languages of other peoples". These men are enabling the Institution to educate those who seek better understanding through linguistic and cultural knowledge of the different peoples of the world. No one really understands how another national thinks and feels unless he comprehends his culture and has some understanding of its linguistic manifestations. Certainly, language understanding is an important key to world friendship - and world friendship is the important key to the door which opens into an era of world peace for generations to come. It is difficult for John to know Ivan, Johan, or Chiang unless they can speak and laugh together.

Other Nations Accept Idea.

1950 and 1951 were years devoted to carrying the Polycultural concept to other nations in the hope that they too would move toward establishment of Polycultural Institutions in their own countries. We envision eventually a Polycultural Institution in such other countries as Pakistan, France, Turkey, Ceylon, El Salvador, the Netherlands, China, Norway and Korea. Some leaders in such countries as these, through their universities, have already been receptive to the idea. Many universities in all of these and other foreign countries now accept our credits and are in liaison relationship with us.

The Polycultural Institution of America approaches its eighth year of existence and it is looking forward, not backward. For example, we have just recently announced plans for the development for an Institute of Philosophical Inquiry. It is being organized for research on the problems of time and space and for other special inquiries.

So, you see, we have come a long way, though it is still but a modest beginning, and we have come to feel, as we hope you will, that the Polycultural concept is good. So, let us be polycultural!

Now, I will present to you, with the help of documentary and on architectural drawings on slides, and with a running comment, the present, and the future as we envision it for the Polycultural Institution of America. Remember, few things great or significant ever evolve without a willingness to have vision and a willingness to work for that vision.

The Institution at Present.

Our Motto reads:

"In learning one another's language and civilization lies a better understanding of one another, and in better understanding lies a promise for the World's betterment."

This motto is repeated in 64 languages on the pages of the PIA catalogue, and is indicative of the final goal of the institution.

House Bill 3393, 81st Congress, introduced by the late Congressman William Lemke who was one of the first to join the Board of Regents of the Polycultural Institution of America, is in the spirit of the PIA motto. The appropriation requested by this Bill was 25 million dollars.

Of course, the learning of cultures and languages has no practical value for mankind, unless the necessity of international and intercultural cooperation is clearly understood and desired. This institution endeavors to inculcate upon the student's minds the doctrine of "Improvement of the world through self-improvement." "Doctor - cure yourself first," is a saying applicable to Americans and non-Americans as well - to both students and teachers. We apply this saying to ourselves; PIA faculty, and staff are in a constant search for self-improvement. We urge our students to search within themselves so as to find their dormant potentialities, and so as to realize their abilities to contribute to their immediate society, as well as to society of the World. Our Institute of Adult Studies directs its training to this kind of self-realization.

The Institute of Adult Studies is subdivided into three divisions:

The Division of Scholastic Studies which offers to adults a great variety of courses normally pursued in Elementary, Junior High and High Schools, Colleges, and universities.

The Division of Vocational Studies offers Arts and Crafts, as well as Training for Leadership, Music, and Applied Optics.

The Division of Recreational Studies offers Art Appreciation, Book Reading and Criticism, Social and Folk Dancing, Social Games, and the like.

Our Senior Institute is that of Anthropology and Linguistics, with a subdivision devoted to study and research in ethnopsychology. This graduate school of the Institute offers courses in:

Anthropology
Archeology and Art
Paleontology
Linguistics, and Ethnic Psychology courses.

Language and Cultural Area Institutes

The Institute of East-Asian Studies offers courses in the cultures of Burma, China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Philippine, Thai, and Indo-China. Ability to read in the language of the country is a prerequisite for taking a credit course in the respective culture.

This and the following four institutes are sometimes called Area Studies Institutes. All five of them operate on upper under-graduate level in study and research in the culture curricula.

This academic and administrative pattern is uniform for all five Area Institutes, as I have already stated.

The Institute of Middle-Asian Studies offers courses in the cultures of Bengal, Gudjarat, Maratha, Pakistan, and other cultures of Industani, as well as cultures of Afghanistan and Tibet.

The Institute of West-Asian Studies offers courses in cultures of Arabic countries, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ethiopia, Palestine, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey.

The Institute of East-European Studies offers courses in the cultures of Albania, Bulgaria, Byelorussia, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, U.S.S.R., Ukraine, and Yugoslavia.

And finally the Institute of West-European Studies offers courses in the cultures of Scandinavian countries, Netherlands, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Eire, and of the British Isles.

A special program leading to a Professional Certificate of Translator is available for those graduated from High Schools, which is the lowest qualification for admission to an Area Institute at PIA.

A New Institute Formed.

The latest formed is the Institute of Philosophical Inquiries whose purpose is to engage in research on the nature of Space and Time, and to make inquiries on the phenomena which have not yet been fully explained by the methods of physical sciences. I use the term physical sciences as an antonym for metaphysics.

Teaching Method.

Now, our teaching method is advanced and efficient. A bold remark, you may say! Fortunately, this is not only my opinion. It has been made by educators from other colleges and universities. This letter, as you can see from the slide, is from one of them - Dr. Callaway thoroughly endorses our program and method.

The next slide shows a letter from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University. It deals with the case of Mr. Garges, a student of American parentage, freshly graduated from George Washington University, who was admitted to our school, to prepare for the entrance examination of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Harvard.

He wished to specialize in Slavics. After 15½ weeks of intensive study at PIA during the summer session of 1949 he went to Harvard University to take the examination.

A few months later we received a letter stating that Mr. Garges, on the strength of our single Summer Session training, has been admitted to the second year of graduate studies in Slavics there, and that he had passed satisfactorily his examination permitting him to enter upon the second semester of the second year of graduate studies in Slavics at Harvard. In plain words this means that in this particular case a single summer session at PIA was equivalent to two semesters at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University. This is but one case from our files.

Dr. Callaway in his letter tells something about the foundation on which our teaching achievements are based and cites especially the value of our small classes, and of our excellent faculty.

Indeed our classes are small, not more than 6 students to a class, often 2 - 3 students.

Why We Limit Our Classes.

The next slide illustrates why we limit our classes to six.

This correlation of efficiency to number of students as indicated by the curves and shown by the slide is a result of my experimental research at George Washington and Johns Hopkins Universities. Interestingly, Chicago University and Columbia University came to the same optima: 5 - 6 students to a class for classes composed of students 20 - 30, and 6 - 7 students to a class for classes with students over 30 years of age.

However, we recognize that system can not take the place of faculty competence.

How can we be unsuccessful in teaching cultures and languages when these are taught by highly qualified persons - and when the cultures and languages they teach are their own.

34 Ph.D.'s, 38 M.A.'s, 22 Bachelors, and 17 language assistants are on the list of PIA faculty. Among our faculty there are both full time and part time instructors, most of them teach on a part time basis which fits in well with our own and the typical Washington schedule.

Other Universities Credit Our Work Fully.

The next slide shows you over a dozen of the documentary letters from an average cross section of American colleges and universities, who accept PIA credits on a parity basis. These letters are only a part of our file of academic reciprocity with other institutions of higher learning.

Summer Session Announcement for 1952.

Before giving you a glimpse or two at PIA's future, I would like to make an announcement concerning our summer session of 1952.

The summer session begins June 9th and ends September 19th. All subjects taught by the five area institutes are offered. This means any of the 67 world languages and cultures, and the American culture and language to those who want to know the United States of America from the inside, and not alone from the outside. Our courses in English for foreigners will be offered again this summer.

A special feature of this summer program at the Institute of Anthropology and Linguistics is two courses in Ethnic Psychology.

June 9th to July 25th a course in the Psychology of Slavic peoples will be offered, and August 4th to September 19th a course in the Psychology of non-Slavic peoples of Eastern Europe will be taught.

Scholarships Offered.

This summer we will give full scholarships in tuition which will be distributed in this way:

In a group of three students registered as a group for a complete summer course in the same class at PIA one student will be admitted tuition free. Therefore the tuition fees will need to be paid for only the two other students.

We know that the Embassies and Legations in Washington will want to cooperate by directing students to this opportunity for Summer Scholarships. By so doing they will help us to build the polycultural idea. We will tell you more about it by mail.

In conclusion of our lantern slides show, I wish you to see Polycultural City, which is the name of the future campus of the Polycultural Institution of America. I hope to see our plans for the campus materialized while I am still alive. In any case we shall do our best to make the first few buildings ready in 5 - 10 years, and we will prepare a continuation plan for our successors if certain circumstances within my life span prevent us from erecting an adequate campus for this national-international institution - the Polycultural Institution of America.

The Following Slides Were Shown:

- No. 1 The Polycultural Building - administration
- No. 2 Polycultural Theater for drama, opera, light opera, and music generally.
- No. 3 & 4 PIA Hotels for Men and Women students.
- No. 6 All Christian Cathedral for the Catholic, Presbyterian and Episcopalian, Greek and Russian Orthodox, and for other Protestant denominations, located separately in each of the four wings of the Cathedral.
- No. 6a Sinagogue, and 6b a Mosque.
- No. 9 The Institute of Adult Studies for "Life Long Learning".
- No. 10 The Institute of Anthropology and Linguistics.
- No. 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15. The five (5) Area Institutes which were described earlier.
- No. 17 The Polycultural Palace, an outstanding structure for cultural recreation and social gatherings.
- It will have:
- (a) PIA Club
 - (b) Restaurant for 1,000 seats
 - (c) Banquet Halls and Rooms
 - (d) Dance Halls
 - (e) Swimming pool
 - (f) Roman Therms - a replica of the hot baths of the Roman and Greek empires.
- No. 18 The Biology and Medicine Research Center which will also house the newly created Institute of Philosophical Inquiry.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE POLYCULTURAL INSTITUTION OF
AMERICA FOR THE SUMMER SESSION OF 1952

- Summer Session: Begins June 9 and ends September 19 -

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ETHNOPSYCHOLOGY OF EAST EUROPEAN AREA

First Session: June 9 - July 25. Ethnic Psychology of Slavic Peoples.

Second Session: August 4 - September 19. Ethnic Psychology of Non-Slavic Peoples.

BROAD OBJECTIVE OF COURSES:

To present to students the epos and history of pre-selected groups of peoples inhabiting Eastern Europe, and to interpret their national characteristics and behavior patterns through scrutiny of their national development, including their legends, mores, heroic concepts, history, and socio-political growth. (A student so trained should be better prepared to formulate rationally the behavior of a nation under a given set of ecological, economic, and social political conditions.)

*REGULAR COURSE PROGRAM:

Classes will meet three times a week - one and a half hour sessions.

Morning classes: 8:30 to 10:00 & 10:00 to 11:30.

Evening classes: 6:30 to 8:00 & 8:00 to 9:30.

*INTENSIVE COURSE PROGRAM:

Classes will meet five times a week, Monday through Friday - three hours a day.

Morning classes: 8:30 to 11:30.

Afternoon classes: 1:30 to 4:30.

Evening classes: 6:30 to 9:30.

(*Classes scheduled may be withdrawn where less than 6 students register.)

COURSES PARTICULARLY VALUABLE FOR:

1. American or foreign government officials engaged in all branches of foreign relations - students planning to enter such work.
2. Executives in charge of foreign development promotion of trade & industry.
3. Economic and military planners and strategists.

Introduction to Ethnopsychology. Required of all students registered for Ethnic Psychology courses. Deals with the conception of the individual mind and the group mind. Individual and group personality. The role of epos and history in ethnological research.

Ethnopsychology of Slavic Peoples. Dealing particularly with Slavs of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Russia. Traces origin, mythology, legendary and national heroes, folklore, historical development bearing upon modeling of national behavior and character. Psychological interpretation of national differences in the light of epos, folklore, and history. Analysis and forecasting of national behavior.

Ethnopsychology of Non-Slavs in Eastern Europe. Dealing particularly with peoples of Finland, Latvia, and Turkey. Treatment as in course described above.

Early registration is recommended.